

What has changed?

The rules are tougher... and more secure. We've changed the procedures surrounding Ontario birth certificates to protect the integrity of this vital document. These changes include:

- The form you use to request a birth certificate now requires the signature of a guarantor – a Canadian citizen in an approved profession (such as a judge, teacher, doctor, police officer, mayor, lawyer or pharmacist) who has known you for at least two years.
- Ontarians may only have one birth certificate at any one time. In the past, it was possible to obtain more than one birth certificate without canceling the first one (e.g., separated parents could each have a copy of their child's birth certificate).
- To stop fraud and identity theft, you now have to report a lost, stolen, destroyed or found birth certificate right away. This information will be shared with other government agencies, such as the federal passport office and law enforcement officials.
- Lost or stolen birth certificates will be deactivated immediately, to reassure you that your lost or stolen certificate cannot easily be used by someone else.
- Those who misuse birth certificates or provide false information on applications will face significant fines and possible jail terms.

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your identity = your freedom

let's keep it safe



Ontario's birth certificate
rules have changed.

Here's what you need to
know to protect your
personal information.

Office of the Registrar General
Ministry of Consumer and Business Services
P.O. Box 4600
189 Red River Road
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6L8
Tel: 1-800-461-2156 (in Ontario)
Tel: (416) 325-8305 (in Toronto)

ISBN 0-7794-3095-6
03/2002 - 48M

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Why have the rules changed?

Our goal is to protect you, your identity and your freedom.

Your Ontario birth certificate is the key to your identity. It's the most important way to prove your name, age and where you were born. You need it to gain access to many programs and services – including health cards, drivers' licences, passports and social benefits. And more and more, you need it in dealings with governments and law enforcement agencies in Ontario, across Canada and around the world.

The Ontario government has a new strategy to enhance the security of vital documents. We want to protect Ontarians from identity theft and fraud – and to help our law enforcement agencies fight crime and terrorism.

In the fall of 2001, the Ontario government passed a new law to change and strengthen the security and safeguards in place for issuing birth certificates. Why? To protect you.

Will the application process take longer?

As long as the new requirements are met, you will still be able to get same-day services in most cases.

Should I carry my birth certificate in my wallet?

No. Your birth certificate is a valuable document. It should not be carried in your wallet or purse. We strongly recommend that you store your birth certificate – along with all your other vital documents – in a safe location. On the rare occasion when you do need to carry it with you, safeguard it and treat it as a valuable document (like your passport).

What should I do if my birth certificate is lost or stolen?

If you have lost your birth certificate, report it to the Office of the Registrar General (ORG) immediately by calling 1-800-461-2156 or (416) 325-8305. They will deactivate your birth certificate to prevent others from using it improperly. The ORG will also notify other government bodies such as passport offices and law enforcement agencies so they can assist in protecting your identity. If you find a birth certificate, notify the ORG or deliver it to the police immediately.

How do I obtain a new birth certificate if I don't have one?

Applications by fax or mail

If you need a birth certificate, a certified copy of a birth registration, or a search for a birth record, you can download the new application form on the Internet at www.cbs.gov.on.ca, or call 1-800-461-2156 or (416) 325-8305.



You must complete the applicant's part of the form and find a guarantor who will complete the guarantor's portion of the application form.

You can pay by credit card, cheque or money order. Please mail your application and payment to the Office of the Registrar General, P.O. Box 4600, 189 Red River Road, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6L8.

If you're paying by credit card, you can also fax your application to (807) 343-7459.

Applications in person

You can apply in person at any one of 15 over-the-counter service locations throughout Ontario. Since you must get a signature from a guarantor, please take the following steps in advance to avoid making an extra visit:

- Download the new application form on the Internet at www.cbs.gov.on.ca or call ORG to receive a form by fax or mail.
- Complete the applicant's part of the form and find a guarantor who will complete the guarantor's portion of the application form.

Naturally, you can visit an over-the-counter service location to receive an application form and follow the same process.

- Bring your completed application with payment by cash, cheque, credit card, debit card or money order with you to one of our offices.

To find one of the 15 over-the-counter service locations, visit our website or call the 1-800 number for details.

